

**MEAP**

**MICHIGAN  
EDUCATIONAL  
ASSESSMENT  
PROGRAM**

**Grade 8  
Social Studies**

***Released Items***

***Winter 2003***

**Geography**

**Directions:** Study the following information. Use it with what you already know to answer the questions that follow.

**A WORLD CULTURAL REGION**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Continent</b>	<b>Language</b>
Argentina	South America	Spanish
Bolivia	South America	Spanish
Chile	South America	Spanish
Columbia	South America	Spanish
Costa Rica	North America	Spanish
Cuba	North America	Spanish
Dominican Republic	North America	Spanish
Ecuador	South America	Spanish
El Salvador	North America	Spanish
Equatorial Guinea	Africa	Spanish
Guatemala	North America	Spanish
Honduras	North America	Spanish
Mexico	North America	Spanish
Nicaragua	North America	Spanish
Panama	North America	Spanish
Paraguay	South America	Spanish
Peru	South America	Spanish
Spain	Europe	Spanish
Uruguay	South America	Spanish
Venezuela	South America	Spanish

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|---|--|
| <p>6 The geographic idea that caused this world cultural region is</p> <p>A ecosystem.</p> <p>B environment.</p> <p>C location.</p> <p>D movement.</p>  | <p>9 A cultural region based on the same characteristic as the chart could include</p> <p>A England, United States, and Australia.</p> <p>B Japan, China, and Vietnam.</p> <p>C Poland, Sweden, and Finland.</p> <p>D Russia, Germany, and France.</p>               |
| <p>7 Brazil is a South American country not part of this cultural region because</p> <p>A Brazil contains a large rainforest.</p> <p>B Brazilians speak Portuguese.</p> <p>C Brazil is the largest country in South America.</p> <p>D many Brazilians are Christians.</p> | <p>10 An advantage countries in the cultural group on the chart would have if they all decided to form a trade agreement would be their</p> <p>A common governments.</p> <p>B common money systems.</p> <p>C ease of communication.</p> <p>D relative locations.</p> |
| <p>8 Spain, Brazil, and Italy could belong to the same cultural region based on</p> <p>A language.</p> <p>B latitude.</p> <p>C location.</p> <p>D religion.</p>   |  |
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**Civics**

**Directions:** Read the following passage and use it with what you already know to answer the questions that follow.

## **VOTERS QUESTION THE CANDIDATES**

*A public meeting was held last Wednesday evening. Political candidates running for federal, state, and local offices were ready to answer questions from the audience.*

The following are some of the questions from the audience.

**Audience member 1** asked, “How do members of the panel feel about United States involvement in foreign wars?” This person went on to state his view that “the United States should not worry about others. Let them fight their own battles.”

**Audience member 2** asked the United States Senator, “Why should the United States remain a member of the United Nations?”

**Audience member 3** asked the United States Representative, “Why did you agree to remove certain parts of a recently passed law?”

**Audience member 4** was concerned about governmental control over business and industry. She asked all the candidates their views on the subject.

**Audience member 5** stated, “My home is very important to my family and now the state wants to take it away to build a highway.” Then he asked the panel, “How can the state do this?”

- 26 The view of audience member 1 is an example of
- A capitalism.
  - B communism.
  - C expansionism.
  - D isolationism.
- 27 In response to audience member 2, the senator gave all of the following reasons. Which is the **MAIN** reason?
- A To promote trade between member countries
  - B To build American military bases in foreign countries
  - C To establish and maintain international peace and security
  - D To promote tourism and cultural exchange between countries
- 28 As an answer to audience member 3, the representative said she did this so that other parts of this beneficial bill would pass. This is an example of which of the following?
- A compromise
  - B executive agreement
  - C majority vote
  - D popular sovereignty
- 29 Which of the following is a real example of the concern voiced by audience member 4?
- A The government directs banks to give gifts to people who open new savings accounts.
  - B The government requires automobile manufacturers to follow pollution control guidelines.
  - C The government sets the exact number of ingredients used in food products.
  - D The government requires stores to offer credit.
- 30 Which of the following explains the government's action in the situation described by audience member 5?
- A Government never has any right to take property away from a citizen.
  - B Government can purchase property at fair market value if it is for the public good.
  - C Government can take property from a citizen and give it to another citizen.
  - D Government can take property from a citizen if the property is in a rundown condition.

## Economics

**Directions:** Read the following passage and use it with what you already know to answer the questions that follow.

### BRETT'S PRINT SHOP NEEDS A LOAN

*Brett, who owns a print shop, needs to replace his old printing presses with more modern, energy-efficient equipment. He went to see Juanita, a loan officer at First City Bank.*

**Juanita:** Brett, your plan to reduce your costs by replacing your old equipment is good. Have you compared prices from different suppliers?

**Brett:** Yes, and the company I've chosen gives me the most energy savings per dollar cost.

**Juanita:** Can you support your projections for increased profits?

**Brett:** Yes. I calculated all of my income from last year. Then I subtracted the cost savings to get the increased profit.

**Juanita:** After you give us your data on that, I can get the loan for you at 12.5 percent.

**Brett:** Can you make that 11.5 percent? You know I have a good record paying off my previous loans with your bank.

**Juanita:** I'll see what I can do.

- 36** How did Brett select this particular type of new printing press?
- A** He used the same brand he already had.
  - B** He tried to find the cheapest model available.
  - C** He compared several brands to find the best value.
  - D** He found out what model was high in demand.
- 37** What business strategy was Brett using when he went to the bank?
- A** He needed new equipment to make a new kind of product.
  - B** He wanted to expand his business in order to hire more people.
  - C** He did not want to risk his own money on the new equipment.
  - D** He wanted to modernize his business and improve his long-term profits.
- 38** Why did Brett come to see Juanita instead of some other banker?
- A** Brett had previous business with Juanita and was satisfied with the service.
  - B** Brett thought Juanita looked like a nice person.
  - C** Brett probably checked Juanita's credit rating before he decided to come in.
  - D** Brett felt he could get a higher interest rate by going to Juanita.
- 39** Why did Juanita ask for documentation on Brett's calculations?
- A** Banks want to delay making loans to businesses.
  - B** Government regulations require that banks are careful when they lend money.
  - C** Financial transactions always generate a lot of paperwork for both parties.
  - D** The borrower's credit check showed that he was a bad risk.
- 40** Is Brett going to make more profit?
- A** Probably, since he is lowering costs and can lower his prices.
  - B** Probably, since he'll have lower costs while his sales stay level.
  - C** Probably not, since the cost of the loan will eat up the extra profit.
  - D** Probably not, since his customer base is clearly falling.

**Inquiry**

**Directions:** Read the following information about a public policy issue. Use it with what you already know to complete the tasks that follow. You should take about 20 minutes to complete both Task I and Task II.

**ELECTORAL COLLEGE**

The United States Constitution provides for the election of the President through the Electoral College. There is some debate about whether the Electoral College should be abolished. Read the following information on the Electoral College.

**DATA SECTION****Part A**

<b>Presidential Winners Who Lost the Popular Vote</b>			
<b>Year</b>	<b>President</b>	<b>Electoral Vote Margin</b>	<b>Popular Vote Margin</b>
1824	John Quincy Adams	*	-44,804
1876	Rutherford B. Hayes	1 vote	-264,292
1888	Benjamin Harrison	65 votes	-100,456
2000	George W. Bush	4 votes	-337,576

\* John Quincy Adams had fewer electoral votes than Andrew Jackson, but the House of Representatives elected John Quincy Adams the president.

**Part B**

<b>Electoral College Poll Results</b>	
<b>Year</b>	<b>Percentage of Americans in Favor of Abolishing the Electoral College</b>
1966	63%
1968	81%
1980	67%
2000	61%

*Source: Gallup Poll*



**COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING TASKS:****Task I: Interpreting Information**

- 46** Study the information in the Data Section. Which of the following statements best describes the *relationship between the years 1966 to 2000 and the percentage of Americans in favor of abolishing the Electoral College?* Be sure to mark your answer in your ANSWER FOLDER.
- A** As the years increased, the percentage of Americans in favor of abolishing the Electoral College increased.
  - B** As the years increased, the percentage of Americans in favor of abolishing the Electoral College decreased.
  - C** As the years increased, the percentage of Americans in favor of abolishing the Electoral College increased then decreased.
  - D** As the years increased, the percentage of Americans in favor of abolishing the Electoral College decreased then increased.

**Task II: Taking a Stand**

- 47 You will now take a stand on the following public policy issue: **Should the United States Congress amend the Constitution to abolish the Electoral College?** You may either support or oppose an amendment abolishing the Electoral College. Write a letter to your congressional representative.

You will be graded on the following. It is not enough to only state your opinion.

- Write a clear and supported statement of your position.
- Support your position using a core democratic value.
- Support your position with knowledge from history, geography, civics, or economics (other than the core democratic values).
- Support your position with information from the Data Section.

Remember to: Use complete sentences.

Explain your reasons in detail.

Explain how the core democratic value you use connects to your position.

Write or print neatly on the lines provided in your ANSWER FOLDER.

**ANSWER THIS ITEM IN YOUR ANSWER FOLDER.**

**NOTHING WRITTEN IN THIS TEST BOOKLET WILL BE SCORED.**

# GRADE 8

## SOCIAL STUDIES

### Inquiry and Decision Making

47 Should the United States Congress amend the Constitution to abolish the Electoral College?

Dear United States Representative:

I think you should not

Score Point: 0

This response does not provide a clear and supported position on the issue.

## Inquiry and Decision Making

47 Should the United States Congress amend the Constitution to abolish the Electoral College?

Dear United States Representative:

I don't think that the United States Congress should abolish it for many things. They play a very important role in election and president and vice president.

First of all without the electoral college there would be a lot of confusion. People would argue and say that it's not a fair vote because

there is no electoral college. Since there is one right now and nothing is going wrong with it, why change it. Our votes and elections in the past have been ok and nothing bad has happened and we have had the electoral college, so I say we just keep it the same.

Without an electoral college there will be a lot of complaints and a lot of arguments. Everything will get messed up. I just think that it would be a lot better to keep the electoral college.

Score Point: 1

This response provides a clear and supported position on the issue.

## Inquiry and Decision Making

47 Should the United States Congress amend the Constitution to abolish the Electoral College?

Dear United States Representative:

I do think they should get rid of the Electoral college. The people should have 100% decision on who the president should be. Besides the president has more effect on the people. What's the point of voting if our votes don't count. According to the graph in the data section all 4 years over half of the people said they wanted to

abolish it. According to the constitution in the first 10 amendments it states that we should have pursuit of happiness & over half of the people admit happy.

Score Point: 2

This response provides a clear position on the issue and supports it with data from the Data Section.

**Inquiry and Decision Making**

47 Should the United States Congress amend the Constitution to abolish the Electoral College?

Dear United States Representative:

I think that the United States Congress should amend the Constitution to abolish the Electoral College.

Over the years, the percentage of Americans in favor of abolishing the Electoral College has been above 50%. Popular Sovereignty gives the people the right to change parts of the government

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE

that does not meet the public interest. Since the majority of the people disagree with the Electoral College, action should be taken to abolish it.

During an election, the outcome should be based on the popular vote, because that is the people's voice. So many times one candidate can win the popular vote by a landslide, but is denied the presidency by the Electoral College vote, sometimes only by one vote. In 1876, Rutherford B. Hayes won the election by one vote, but the popular vote went against him by 264,292 votes. This past election in 2000, George W. Bush won by four Electoral College votes, but the popular vote went against him by 337,576 votes.

The people's voices should be heard. Congress should abolish the Electoral College.

Score Point: 3

This response provides a clear position on the issue and supports it with the correct application of a Core Democratic Value (Popular Sovereignty) and data from the Data Section.

## Inquiry and Decision Making

47 Should the United States Congress amend the Constitution to abolish the Electoral College?

Dear United States Representative:

I do not think that the United States Congress should amend the constitution to abolish the Electoral College. Our Core Democratic Value, Common Good, states that everyone together, in this case the nation, needs to do what ever they can for the good of their country as long as it doesn't step on the rights of others, so in this case we should keep the Electoral College, which would be best for everyone, because the people we elect to

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE



be in the Electoral College know a lot more about politics than the ordinary citizen does, so it would be wiser and better for everyone if we went on their vote and not just by ~~our~~ vote of popularity. In history class I learned that we elect ~~the~~ people who are in the Electoral College, so they would be voting on behalf of us and vote for what we want any way. Also, as the years have increased, the percentage of Americans in favor of abolishing the Electoral College has increased then decreased because in 1966, it was 63% in favor, in 1968, 81% were in favor, in 1970, 67% were in favor, and in 2000, 61% (the lowest reading) were in favor. Since the rate in favor of abolishing has gone down, I do not think that the United States Congress should amend the constitution to abolish the Electoral College.

**Score Point: 4**

This response provides a clear position on the issue and supports it with the correct application of a Core Democratic Value (Common Good), prior social studies knowledge of civics (selection of electors) and data from the Data Section



## Some Core Democratic Values of American Constitutional Democracy

Core democratic values are the fundamental beliefs and constitutional principles of American society. These values unite all Americans. They are expressed in the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, and other significant documents, speeches, and writings of the nation. Below is a list of some core democratic values. **You may use any core democratic value to support your position, including those not on this list.** Be sure to explain how the value you choose supports the position you take.

### Fundamental Beliefs

Life

Liberty

The Pursuit of Happiness

Public or Common Good

Justice

Equality

Diversity

Truth

Popular Sovereignty

Patriotism

### Constitutional Principles

The Rule of Law

Separation of Powers

Representative Government

Checks and Balances

Individual Rights

Freedom of Religion

Federalism

Civilian Control of the Military